Lake Nipigon Integrated Resource Management Plan

Ontario

Ministry of Natural Resources

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FOREWORD

This Integrated Resource Management Plan for Lake Nipigon was prepared to provide direction to Ministry of Natural Resources programs. The public was involved twice in the review of this plan.

Contents of this plan represent an update of the direction for Area 7 in the Nipigon District Land Use Guidelines. The final plan was prepared with consideration to:

- public input on identified issues
- major provincial government thrusts
- balancing of extreme ideas
    - fact vs. emotion
    - integrated vs. single purpose use
    - traditional vs. new uses
- improvement of economic and social conditions
- the need for professional and technical soundness
- adherence to approved provincial guidelines.

This plan shall be in effect until the year 2000. Flexibility has been built into the plan so that unanticipated proposals can be addressed and possibly accommodated. The public may address their comments on this plan to the District Manager.

G. P. Elliott
Regional Director
North Central Region

August 25, 1988

A. Currie
District Manager
Nipigon District

August 25, 1988

PLAN DE GESTION INTÉGRÉE DES RESSOURCES
DU LAC NIPIGON

SOMMAIRE

Le plan de gestion du lac Nipigon continuera de permettre l'utilisation variée du lac, et assurera une certaine expansion à l'exploitation touristique, la construction de chalets et la chasse.

Le plan propose l'aménagement de deux nouvelles auberges, de même que des possibilités de construction de chalets sur les terres de la Couronne dans la municipalité de Beardmore. Si ces projets sont menés à bien, de nouvelles routes d'accès seront aménagées pour accéder aux nouvelles auberges et aux nouveaux lots de chalets.

Les données actuelles indiquent que la demande de pêche à l'omble de fontaine est trop forte, nécessitant peut-être l'utilisation de nouvelles techniques de gestion. De nouvelles stratégies et tactiques de gestion visant à maintenir et améliorer les populations de poisson seront mises en oeuvre grâce au Plan de gestion des pêches du district de Nipigon.

Sur les îles du lac Nipigon (McIntyre, Three Mount et péninsules nord), les feux ne seront pas combattus, à moins qu'ils ne représentent un danger pour les vies humaines ou les propriétés. Sur la terre ferme, les feux seront gérés de manière à protéger les vies humaines, les propriétés, le tourisme, les activités récréatives et les ressources forestières. Les communautés établies autour du lac bénéficieront d'une gestion intensive des feux, c'est-à-dire que tout incendie sera combattu avec acharnement et de manière soutenue pour en éviter la propagation.

Bien qu'aucune augmentation du nombre de points d'accès ne soit prévue, le ministère des Richesses naturelles donnera la priorité à l'entretien de ceux qui existent déjà, dès que le budget le permettra.

Des activités de gestion forestière pourront être menées sur la terre ferme, à condition qu'elles ne nuisent pas à certaines valeurs, comme la beauté de la région, les pêches, le tourisme et l'habitat faunique. Dans certains cas, il se peut que la zone de préoccupation de 300 m ne soit pas suffisante et qu'il faille la prolonger pour assurer la protection de telles valeurs.

Il est possible que l'interdiction de chasser le gros gibier sur les îles soit levée et que la chasse à l'orignal soit permise sur certaines d'entre elles. En ne permettant la chasse à l'orignal que sur les îles de la moitié sud du lac, les conflits majeurs avec l'habitat du caribou seront évités.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Integrated Resource Management

The definition of Integrated Resource Management is as follows:

> Integrated Resource Mangement is the co-ordination of resource management programs and activities so that long term benefits are optimized and conflicts between programs are minimized. Benefits are defined by corporately approved program targets and by District Land Use Guidelines.

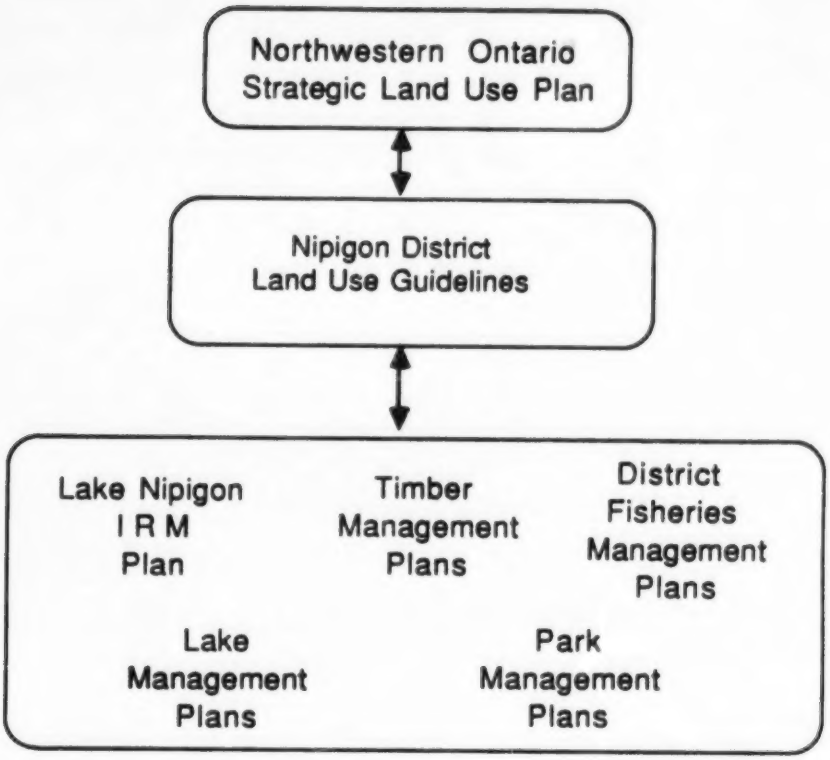
This plan therefore attempts to co-ordinate all the resource management programs of the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) for the geographic area of Lake Nipigon. In essence this co-ordination is known as integrated resource management (IRM).

Figure 1 illustrates how this IRM plan for Lake Nipigon fits into the planning hierarchy of the MNR. Objectives and targets from higher order plans (Northwestern Ontario SLUP and Nipigon DLUG) give direction to lower order resource management plans. Strong linkages exist among the program resource management plans as a result of cross referencing and feedback.

While this IRM plan is on the same level as other resource management plans, it is in some ways similar to the District Land Use Guidelines, as it is refining policy for a part of the District.

FIGURE 1

PLANNING HIERARCHY



↔ Indicates direction and feedback between planning levels

B. Terms of Reference

i) Delineation of the Study Area:

The Lake Nipigon Study Area is identified as Area 7 in the Nipigon District Land Use Guidelines. The intensive study area for which detailed data has been collected and land use decisions will be made, includes Lake Nipigon, it's islands and the mainland within 300 metres of the lake's shoreline.

Indian Reserve lands around Lake Nipigon are not part of the study area. Although the Province of Ontario does not have jurisdiction over reserve lands, it is hoped that the activities on these Reserves would be compatible with uses on adjoining Crown lands and waters.

The four provincial parks and one candidate provincial park around the lake will not be considered as part of the planning area. The Nipigon District Land Use Guidelines, park management plans and interim management statements currently determine the use of these lands. The park management planning process will finalize the land use decisions for these areas.

ii) Goal for Lake Nipigon:

The Ministry of Natural Resources' goal for Lake Nipigon is **to retain the existing mix of uses on an equal priority level.**

The existing mix of uses on Lake Nipigon ranges from resource extraction such as mineral exploration and extraction, commercial fishing and trapping to recreation uses such as sport fishing, camping, cottaging and wildlife viewing.

An equal priority level means that regardless of the resource requirement of different uses, they are all considered as important as each other. For example, this plan contains strategies to ensure the survival of both the caribou population and the fish producers industry, even though they have different levels of resource requirements.

The planning area will provide recreational opportunities and resource products for the continuous social and economic benefit of local residents and the people of Ontario.

iii) Objectives of this Plan:

The objectives of this Integrated Resource Management Plan are:

(i) To provide recreational opportunities on Crown lands and waters for day and extended uses such as fishing, hunting, camping, and recreational boating.

(ii) To provide a variety of natural resource products toward the achievement of the District's targets, while maintaining sustained resource levels.

(iii) To contribute toward the tourism economy of Northern Ontario.

(iv) To identify and protect rare, endangered and sensitive provincial resources and features.

(iv) The Planning Process:

The Integrated Resource Management (I.R.M.) Plan for Lake Nipigon will maintain a regional and provincial perspective, while at the same time addressing the needs of the local and traditional users of the Lake Nipigon area. The plan has been developed in four phases.

Phase I - Background Information, available for public review: Spring, 1986

Phase II - Draft Policy and Optional Plans Report, available for public review: Spring, 1986

Phase III - Draft Lake Nipigon I.R.M. Plan released for public review: Fall, 1987

Phase IV - Approved Plan released for public review: Summer 1988.

The production of the Background Information document involved the collection of detailed information concerning the present use, capability and potential of the land and water resources of the Lake Nipigon area. The Background Information formed the foundation on which the resource policies for the Lake (as specified in the Nipigon DLUG) were tested, optional plans developed (Phase II) and upon which this draft I.R.M. Plan has evolved (Phase III).

Phase II involved the formulation of options: Option 1 stressed preservation of the lake, while Option 2 provided for limited development. These optional plans were made available for public comment in May, 1986. Both options illustrated means in which the resources of the Lake Nipigon area can be allocated to meet the Ministry's objectives.

This final plan was prepared with due consideration given to:

- public input
- provincial thrusts
- a balancing of extreme views
    - fact vs. emotion
    - integration vs. single purpose use
    - traditional vs. new uses
- improvement of economic and social conditions
- a need for professional and technical soundness
- adherence to approved provincial guidelines.

The final plan combines features from both options presented for public review. The final plan has been approved by the Regional Director and will serve as direction for integrating the Ministry of Natural Resources' programs on Lake Nipigon.

This approved plan has been prepared by a District Planning Team with input from the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation.

v) The Review and Amendment Process

Targets and strategies in this plan will be subject to revision based on such factors as changes in government policy, new or refined resource information and significant changes to land use in other planning documents. To accommodate changes, this plan may be reviewed after ten years or more often, if required. The public may request an amendment to the plan by applying to the District Manager. Prior to making any major amendments, the Ministry of Natural Resources will provide an opportunity for public involvement to determine the suitability of the proposed amendment. It is not intended that all targets in the plan will be achieved immediately. The intent is to aim for this level of achievement over the next twelve years: by the year 2000.

C. Overview of the Lake

Lake Nipigon is the largest inland lake contained wholly within Ontario, with a perimeter of 1,050 kilometers and an overall surface area of 4,480 square kilometers (448,000 hectares). Lake Nipigon is slightly oblong in shape, measuring about 100 kilometers by 70 kilometers, but has a rather irregular shoreline with several large bays and jutting peninsulas. The bays, when open and exposed are rocky and sandy, but where extended and protected, tend to become muddy with an approach to marshy conditions. Lake Nipigon contains approximately 500 islands, of which 55 have an area greater than or equal to 25 hectares (.1 square mile). The total perimeter of all the islands on the lake is approximately 1,000 kilometres. Kelvin, Shakespeare, Geikie, Murchison, and Logal Islands are the largest, each exceeding 1,400 hectares in size.

Figure 2: LOCATION OF LAKE NIPIGON

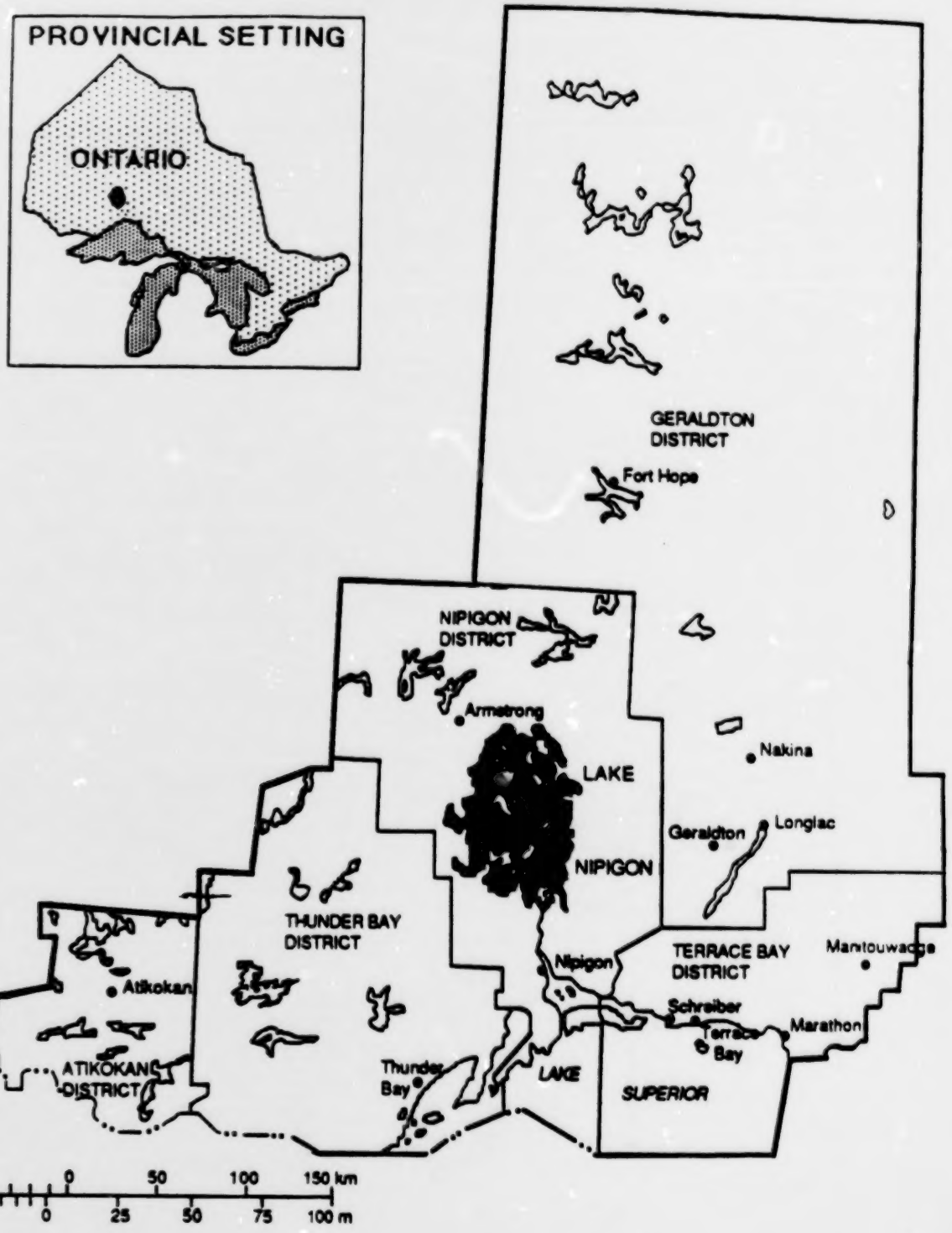


FIGURE 3
THE STUDY AREA

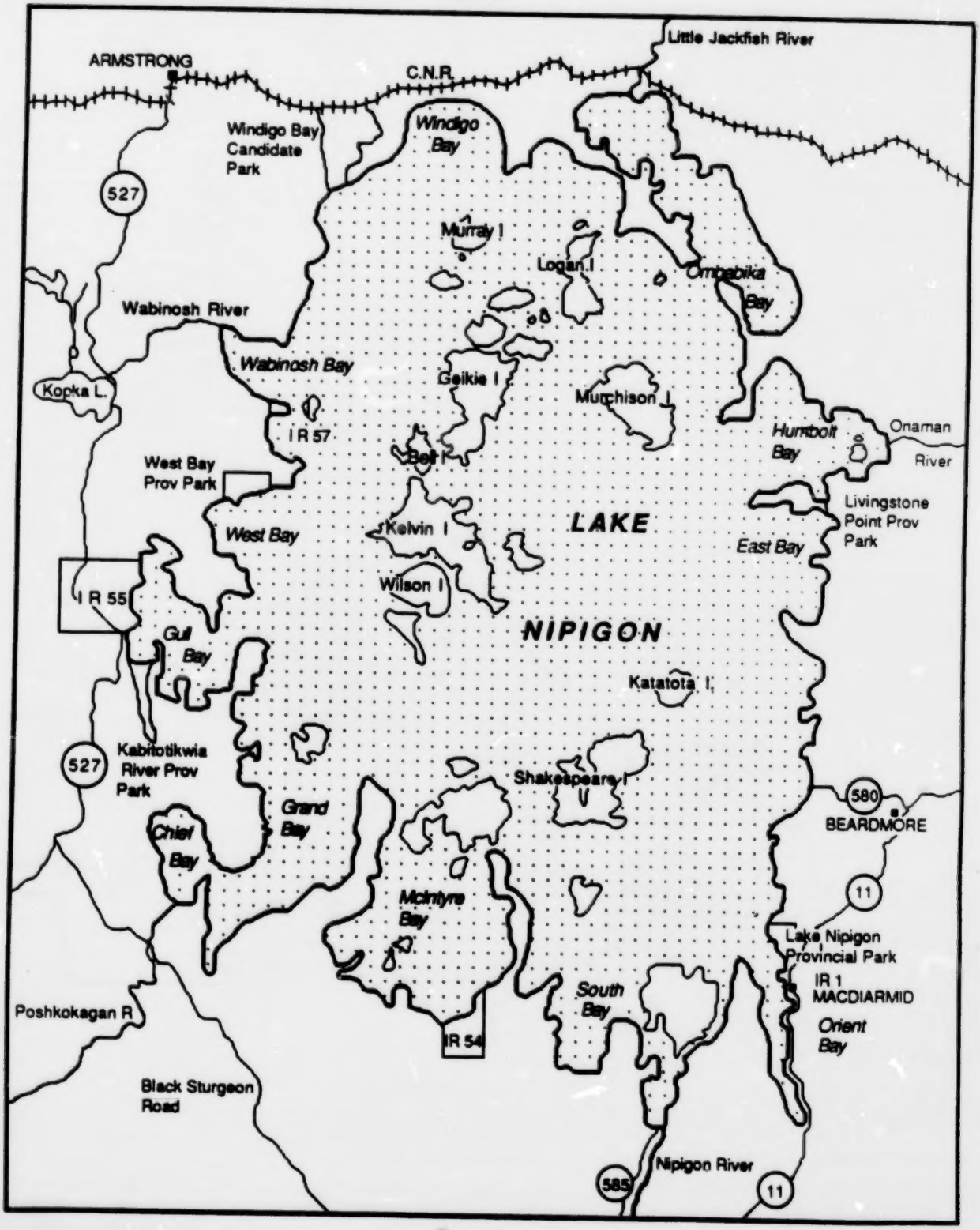
LAKE NIPIGON INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Study Area Boundary (Approximate)

1:600 000 (Approximately)

0 10 20 30 Km

N



The lake remains relatively undeveloped, with limited public access. There are, as yet, no roads traversing the region to the north of Lake Nipigon. The lake is located approximately 170 kilometers north-east of Thunder Bay and approximately 50 kilometers north of the Town of Nipigon. It is situated between 88 degrees and 89 degrees west longitude and between 49 degrees and 15 minutes and 50 degrees 15 minutes north latitude. (Refer to Figures 2 and 3 for the location of Lake Nipigon).

Lying at an elevation of 260 metres above sea level (a.s.l.) and 75 metres above the level of Lake Superior, the water level of Lake Nipigon is controlled by Ontario Hydro's dams on the Nipigon River. The lake has a maximum recorded depth of 137 metres (450 feet). The waters of Lake Nipigon comprise 90 percent of the lake's area, leaving an island area of 360 square kilometers (35,964 hectares).

There are three communities located on the shores of Lake Nipigon: MacDiarmid and Orient Bay on the southeast shore, and Gull River Indian Reserve #55 on the west shore. Rocky Bay Indian Reserve #1 forms part of the settlement at MacDiarmid. Two other Indian Reserves, Jackfish Island IR 57 and McIntyre Bay IR 54 are occupied seasonally.

Approximately 12 kilometers of Lake Nipigon east shore fall within the Municipality of Beardmore. Summer residences are located south of the Namewaminikan River, at South Bay, McIntyre Bay IR, and at a few island locations on the lake.

A major industry on the lake today is the fish producing operation which was established in 1917 as a means of meeting the increased food demand during World War I. Following peak production years during the 1920's and 1930's when harvests exceeded 1,500,000 kgs., the catch stabilized during the 1950's at approximately 500,000 kgs where it has remained to the present.

Sport fishing in the Lake Nipigon area has been renowned since the late 1800's. Angling continues to be very popular in the area today especially for brook and lake trout, walleye and northern pike. There are five tourist establishments in the Orient Bay area, most of which offer cruiser services. There is also a small fishing resort on Gull Bay.

The forest industry has also played an important role in the Lake Nipigon watershed. Throughout the 1900's, log drives were common on almost every major tributary of Lake Nipigon (Blackwater, Wabinosh, Ombabika, Gull, Namewaminikan rivers, etc.). The logs were boomed on Lake Nipigon and subsequently transported to local pulpmills and sawmills by way of the railway or the Nipigon River. Hauling by truck and rail ultimately put an end to these log drives in 1972.

Some of the islands in the northern half of Lake Nipigon support woodland caribou. This is a species whose fragile habitat has become increasingly threatened over the last century. Other significant and sensitive areas on the lake include: identified archaeological and historical sites, double crested cormorant colonies, fish spawning grounds, and bald eagle and osprey nesting sites.

D. Public Involvement

A Draft Plan was taken to the public for comment in September - October, 1987. A total of 75 written responses was received and considered in the preparation of this final plan.

A summary of the public participation program may be found in Appendix 1. A detailed listing of issues raised and the draft plan response are contained in Appendix 2.

II. RESOURCE POLICIES FOR LAKE NIPIGON

A. Access

i) Objective: To permit road access to several locations around the lake to enable optimal recreational use of Lake Nipigon for the enjoyment and benefit of local residents and tourists.

ii) Strategy:

- a number of existing Crown access points on Lake Nipigon will be maintained; others will not. Maintenance will take place only as funds become available;
- no new or upgraded Crown access is planned or will be allowed except to facilities that are approved in this plan;
- Crown access will be limited in favour of stimulating or improving private land access to the lake.

iii) Discussion:

Listed in table 1 are public access points to Lake Nipigon. These access points have been placed into two priority groups. Priority 1 access points will be upgraded and maintained if and when funding becomes available. Priority 2 access points will not be maintained. In addition, to these, there are privately maintained access points to the lake. See Figure 4 for priority 1 and 2 sites.

A proposal to provide a new access point in the north west corner of the lake has been dropped due to potential conflicts with existing tourism operations, terrain constraints and the negative impact such a development might have on the existing caribou population. The costs of any new access in this area will most probably outweigh the benefits. Instead the Ministry of Natural Resources proposes that the main northwest access to the lake occur through either the existing tourist operator located just

FIGURE 4

ACCESS TO LAKE NIPIGON

LAKE NIPIGON INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

1:600 000 (Approximately)

0 10 20 30 Km

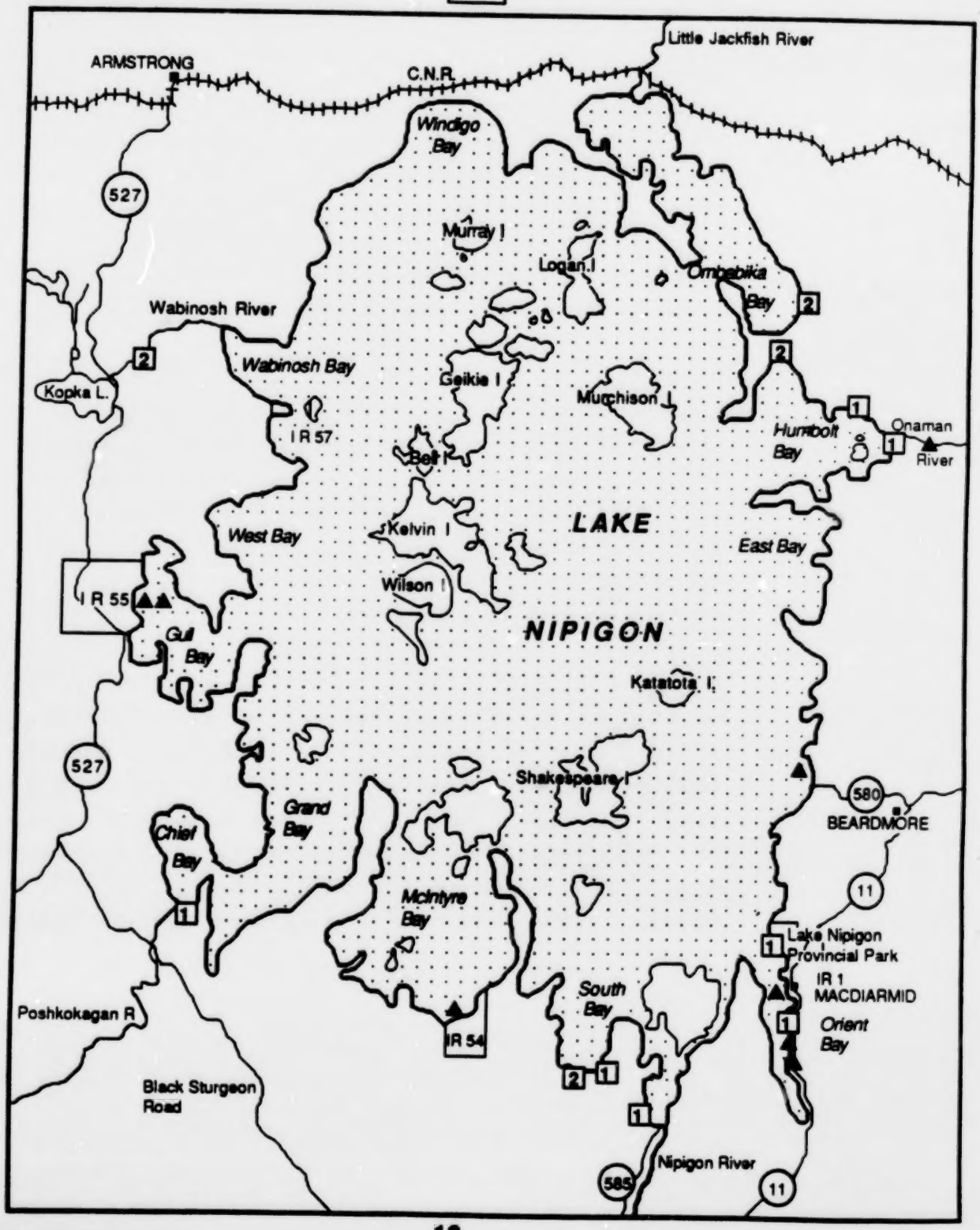
Study Area Boundary (Approximate)

Priority 1 Access Point

Priority 2 Access Point

Private Access Point

N



south of the Gull Bay reserve and/or by the Gull Bay reserve itself. MNR believes that social and economic benefits would be generated to both parties by leaving them as the main access to the west side of the lake.

Table 1
Public Access Points to Lake Nipigon

Access Point	Priority for Maintenance
Poshkokogan River (Chief Bay)	Priority 1 - upgrade but maintain existing capacity levels
South Bay (newer site)	Priority 1
Pine Portage	Priority 1 - old dock will either be removed or upgrade for safety
MacDiarmid MNR Base	Priority 1
Lake Nipigon Provincial Park	Priority 1
Onaman River	Priority 1
Humboldt South	Priority 1
Humboldt North	Priority 2
Ombabika	Priority 2
South Bay (older site)	Priority 2 - negative effect on brook trout spawning site from boat launch. May be closed in future after public consultation
Pishidgi	Priority 2 - Avoid increased access to Wabinosh Bay in order to maintain this part of the lake as a key cruiser operator area

B. Commercial Fur

i) Objective: To promote the full utilization of the fur bearer resource, consistent with humane trapping practices and the maintenance of healthy populations and species diversity.

ii) Target: To harvest 25 beaver/year from the islands of Lake Nipigon.

iii) Strategy:

Due to the size of Lake Nipigon and the remoteness of its islands, present beaver harvest is far below assigned quotas. Trappers will therefore be encouraged by M.N.R. to use trapline resources more fully in keeping with permitted quota.

C. Cottaging

i) Objective: To stimulate the local economy by making Crown land available in the Municipality of Beardmore for private or municipal cottage development.

ii) Strategy:

- ensure that the Official Plan and zoning by-laws permit cottage lot development on the shoreline of Lake Nipigon before disposing of Crown land to developer or municipality
- disposition of land may be by public tender.

iii) Discussion:

The majority of Lake Nipigon's 41 cottages are located in the Poplar Point area of Beardmore. Other cottages are scattered around the south east section of the lake from South Bay to Orient Bay.

While all of Nipigon District's cottaging targets can be met on smaller inland lakes, there is demand for a cottaging experience on a larger body of water like Lake Nipigon. In order to meet some of that demand and contribute toward Beardmore's economic well being, MNR will dispose of Crown land in the Municipality of Beardmore to a developer or the municipality for cottage lots.

Cottage lot disposition is part of the provincial thrust to use Crown land as a development tool. Local employment and annual expenditures will result from this cottage lot disposition. Cottaging is also a traditional use for this part of the lake. Cottages may also be built on private or Indian Reserve lands.

D. Crown Land Recreation

i) Objectives:

- to provide for recreational use by residents (eg. fishing, camping, boating, etc.)
- to increase economic benefits derived from non-resident recreational use of Crown land.

ii) Strategy:

- to minimize competition for Crown Land Camping between resident users and non-resident users in areas where because of limited resources or congestion, the quality of the experience is unsatisfactory;
- provide opportunities for traditional Crown land recreational uses such as camping and non-traditional uses such as sailing wherever possible.

iii) Discussion:

Crown land recreation on Lake Nipigon has traditionally meant sport fishing, boating and camping. While low water temperatures and the size of the lake have restricted use, possibilities exist for new activities such as photography, sailing and sight-seeing. New proposals, such as marinas, which would benefit Crown land camping use on the lake will be considered by the MNR when they arise.

E. Forest Fire Management

Strategy:

To identify resource values in and around Lake Nipigon which require varying levels of protection from forest fires. Fire management objectives for the three zones which comprise the Lake Nipigon Planning area correspond to those specified in the Fire Management Stategies - North Central Region, MNR, 1986. Refer to Figure 5 for Fire Management Zones.

EXTENSIVE FIRE MANAGEMENT ZONE

Zone Description:

This zone consists of the Lake Nipigon islands and three mainland peninsulas (McIntyre, Three Mount and North Peninsulas). This zone historically has a combination of low fire incidence and hazard potential. Fire Management programs will not be emphasized in this zone.

Objective:

The fire management objective for the islands and three peninsulas (McIntyre, North and Three Mount) is to assess and monitor wildfire development and to provide a response if there is a threat to human safety and property values so as to minimize loss of life and property values.

Discussion:

All wildfires that threaten life and property will receive a response designed to save life and minimize property damage. This response could include fire attack, property protection and/or evacuation.

Aggressive suppression or management will be directed to minimize potential site-specific losses. While human life and property values are less concentrated here than in other areas, no less consideration will be given to their protection.

MEASURED FIRE MANAGEMENT ZONE

Zone Description:

This zone includes all those remaining mainland areas (excluding the Intensive zone and the McIntyre, Three Mount and North Peninsulas) which lie within 300 metres of the shoreline of Lake Nipigon and Jackfish Island Indian Reserve 57. Although no timber allocations exist in this zone, these areas contribute toward MNR objectives for the provision of recreation and tourism opportunities.

Objective:

The fire management objective for this zone is to protect human life, to minimize loss of property values due to wildfire, and to protect tourism, recreation and forest resources on the mainland shores of Lake Nipigon.

Discussion:

Wildfires in this zone will receive aggressive initial attack. Escalated suppression activities for these wildfires which do not respond to initial attack will be dependent upon the results of an analysis of potential fire spread. This analysis will be carried out and a response initiated appropriate to that particular fire situation. When fire suppression efforts must be priorized, activities will be directed to higher value sites.

Fire management programs such as hazard reduction, prevention, detection and use of prescribed burns will be emphasized in this zone.

INTENSIVE FIRE MANAGEMENT ZONE

Zone Description:

This zone includes the immediate area around towns and settlements which are not covered under municipal fire agreements. This zone includes Gull Bay, MacDiarmid, Orient Bay, Armstrong and Ferland (refer to Figure 5).

All wildfires in this zone have the potential to cause major social disruption. These areas contain the greatest densities of population, private property and public works in the planning area.

Objective:

The fire management objective for these settled areas is to minimize the threat from wildfire to human safety, property and resource values.

FIGURE 5

FIRE MANAGEMENT ZONES

LAKE NIPIGON INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

1:600 000 (Approximately)

0 10 20 30 Km

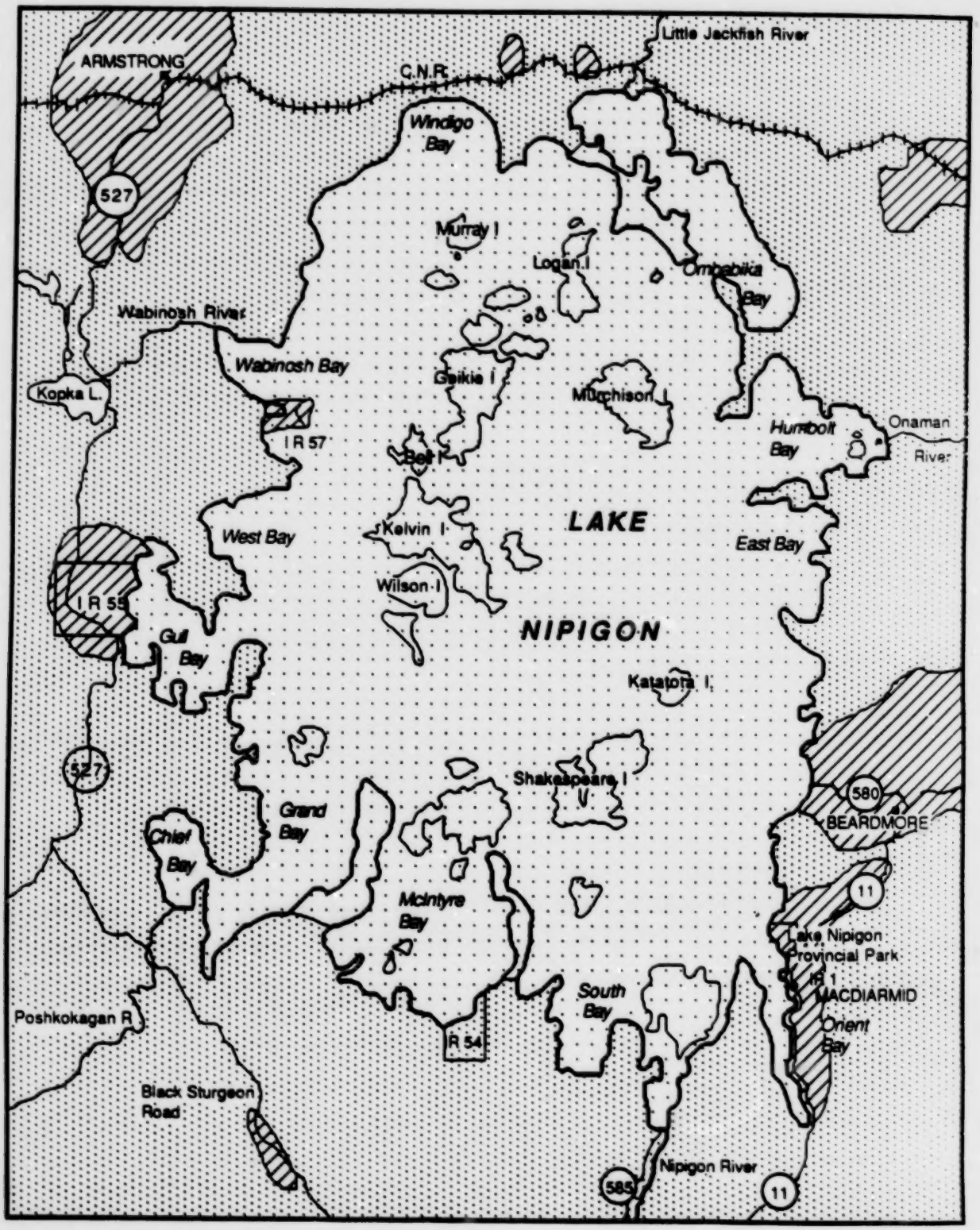
N

Study Area Boundary (Approximate)

Extensive Fire Management

Measured Fire Management

Intensive Fire Management



Discussion:

All wildfires within Intensive Fire Zone will receive aggressive and sustained attack to ensure minimum wildfire size. Management programs (such as hazard reduction, prevention, public detection and reporting of fires) will be emphasized in this zone. An aggresive prevention program will continue to be directed toward limiting the number of fire starts. Wildfires which do occur in this zone will be treated as a suppression priority.

F. Fisheries

i) Broad Objective:

To protect, rehabilitate, enhance and maintain Lake Nipigon's fish community and environment to provide an optimum contribution of fish, fishing opportunities and associated benefits to society.

ii) Targets:

- to harvest from Lake Nipigon by the year 2000, 510,000 kg/year all species. The harvest allocates 494,900 kg (primarily non-sport fish species) to the fish producer industry and 15,200 kg to the sport fishery. The bait fish industry will be encouraged to meet demand;
- as part of the overall target, to harvest 0.08 kg of lake trout per hectare per year, or 36,000 kg/year. Of this total 26,700 kg will be allocated to commercial quotas, while 9,300 kg will be available for sport fishermen;

iii) Strategy:

Detailed strategies for the fisheries of Lake Nipigon are outlined in the District Fisheries Management Plan.

iv) Discussion:

The total potential fish yield of sport and commerical fish from Lake Nipigon is estimated to be 716,800 per year. This supports a fish producer industry of 13 licences with an annual harvest of 494,000 kg. No increase in the number of licences is planned,

however quotas may be adjusted in response to changes in population of fish communities or new knowledge in the science of fish management.

In contrast the sport fishery on Lake Nipigon is much smaller. The 1987 sport fish harvest is estimated to be 5,150 kg, with brook trout and lake trout, walleye and northern pike being the most popular species. Demand for sport fish is anticipated to greatly increase by the year 2000 to 15,200 kg per year. The largest increase in demand is anticipated for lake trout. Current management tactics should satisfy this increase in demand for lake trout. The observed decline in brook trout numbers will require intensive management tactics to maintain and increase brook trout numbers.

The proposed Little Jackfish Hydro Electric project is of concern to MNR due to its potential effect on Lake Nipigon's fishery. MNR is consulting with Ontario Hydro on the preparation of an Environmental Assessment for that project. Should this project proceed, MNR's goal would be to monitor the impact on fish and fish habitat.

G. Forest Management

i) Objective: To manage timber resources within 300 metres of Lake Nipigon shoreline while having high regard for recreation and tourism values of the lake.

ii) Target: Any timber management operations in the planning area will contribute toward the district's timber target and employment in the planning area.

iii) Strategy:

- forest management activities may be carried out only on the mainland of the lake if it does not conflict with values such as aesthetics, fisheries, tourism and wildlife;

- to declare the area within 300 metres of Lake Nipigon shoreline as an Area of Concern in the Timber Management Planning process to allow consideration of all other concerns in light of a range of operating possibilities from no cut, to modified cut to full harvesting operations. The Timber Management Planning process allow for further public input on proposed strategies;
- the 300 metre area of concern will also be expandable when added protection will be necessary for adjacent values;
- to incorporate all of area within 300 metres of Lake Nipigon's shoreline in the Timber Management Planning exercise of surrounding units;
- to apply the approved guidelines for the protection of moose and fish habitat and tourism values in the Timber Management Planning exercise to ensure these values are protected;
- consideration will also be given to protecting caribou habitat and migration routes from disturbance by timber operations;
- no permanent access roads will be allowed within 300 metres of Lake Nipigon for timber operations;
- no timber operations will be permitted on any of the islands of Lake Nipigon.

iv) Discussion:

The shoreline of Lake Nipigon falls within six Timber Management Units: the Lake Nipigon Forest; Abitibi-Auden M.U.; Domtar Armstrong M.U.; Black Sturgeon Forest; Spruce River Forest; Nipigon Crown Working Circle. By putting the entire shoreline into a 300 metre area of concern, it will be highlighted in the planning exercise for each unit and an appropriate level of protection granted consistent with approved provincial guidelines.

H. Mining

The overall intent of the mineral management policy as administered by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines is to provide

for an optimum continuous contribution to the economy by mineral resource industries through orderly development and utilization of available mineral resources consistent with sound environmental practices.

a) Metallic and Non-Metallic Minerals

i) Objective: The Ministry of Natural Resources will keep lands open for exploration and extraction consistent with the land use intent for the area.

ii) Target: No quantitative target exists for this program.

iii) Strategy:

- the Ministries of Natural Resources and Northern Development and Mines will co-operate to ensure that lands with high and moderate potential remain open for mineral exploration wherever possible and that withdrawal from staking is kept to a minimum.

iv) Discussion:

The Beardmore area is part of a high mineral potential Greenstone Belt. Exploration for gold here has been intensive, with three past producing mines recording over one million ounces of gold. The potential for future mineral development does exist along the eastern shore of Lake Nipigon from MacDiarmid north to Humboldt Bay where high mineral potential for gold, silver, platinum, palladium, copper, zinc, lead and nickel is present.

b) Mineral Aggregate

i) Objective: Mineral Aggregate extraction will not be permitted within the 300 meter shoreline of Lake Nipigon. Small sand and gravel pits may be permitted on the islands of Lake Nipigon only where material is necessary to supply a construction purpose on the same island and where extraction will not detrimentally affect natural and cultural resources.

ii) Target: A target has not been set for mineral aggregate production since a detailed resource inventory and demand projection for the Nipigon District is not yet available.

iii) Strategy:

- permits for mineral aggregate extraction will not be issued on the mainland within the 300 metre shoreline of Lake Nipigon;
- permits for small sand and gravel pits may be issued for islands where material will be used to supply a construction purpose located on that island where minimal disturbance to natural and cultural resources is expected.

iv) Discussion:

Mineral aggregates (sand, gravel and crushed stone), provide the bulk of the raw materials essential to the construction industry, road construction and maintenance. As there are few communities in the vicinity of Lake Nipigon, the demand for aggregate is very low. The high cost of transportation also makes Lake Nipigon an unattractive source of aggregate for more distant communities.

Where material is necessary to supply a construction activity within the 300 meter shoreline of Lake Nipigon, aggregate can be transported from outside of the planning area. However, it may not be feasible to transport material to islands in the lake to supply construction located there. Because of this, limited extraction will be permitted on islands to supply construction on the same island. Strict controls will be enforced to preserve aesthetic and recreational values.

c) Peat

i) Objective: To identify significant area of peat and maintain their availability for exploration and possible future extraction on the mainland of Lake Nipigon.

ii) Target: There is no specific target assigned for peat production.

iii) Discussion:

Peat consists of dead and partly decomposed plant matter that has accumulated, in a wet environment such as bogs or fens. No known peat deposits exist in the Planning Area, however exploration may continue on the mainland only.

I. Provincial Parks

There are four Provincial Parks (Lake Nipigon, Livingstone Point, Kabitotikwia River and West Bay) and one candidate park (Windigo Bay) on the shores of Lake Nipigon. Since a separate planning system exists for provincial parks, it was decided that these five areas would be excluded from this planning exercise.

J. Tourism

i) Objective: To provide a continuous contribution to the economy of the Lake Nipigon area from tourism, while ensuring the sustaining capacity of Lake Nipigon is not exceeded and provisions are made for outdoor recreation for local residents.

ii) Target: the ministries of Natural Resources and Tourism and Recreation will encourage the development of two high quality lodges on Lake Nipigon while encouraging the maintenance and upgrading of existing tourist facilities.

iii) Strategy:

- to contribute social and economic benefits to the local area by encouraging the establishment of two lodges. This is part of the provincial thrust to increase tourism in Northwestern Ontario;
- two years after the approval of this plan MTR and MNR will seek ways to allow this lodge development to occur anywhere within the study area provided there is minimal adverse impact on the fishery resource. Both private and Crown land proposals

will be entertained. Methods available to ensure minimum impact on the fishery include: strategies and tactics outlined in the District Fisheries Management Plan such as minimum brook trout size limits and reduced brook trout possession limits;

the potential location of a lodge with regard to fish stocks;

corporate ventures with commercial fishermen and cruise operators;

- MTR and MNR will consider private land proposals within the initial two year time frame. Should private land proposals meet government expectations, within a two year period, the need for Crown land based proposals will be reassessed;
- additional cruiser operations and houseboat rental businesses will be permitted if attached to a new lodge development and if fishery yields permit;
- M.N.R. will not dispose of Crown lands for the establishment of new cruiser operations or houseboat rental businesses unless the above conditions are met;

iii) Discussion:

Existing tourist facilities on Lake Nipigon provide opportunities mainly for fishing and limited sight seeing. Some tourist operators provide guiding services for hunters on the mainland shores of Lake Nipigon. While these facilities form part of the local economy, greater economic benefits would be generated from additional high quality tourist facilities. The private sector will be encouraged to take a lead in this area. The Ministry of Tourism and Recreation will ensure that high standards are maintained with the potential for providing employment to the local economy. The highest priority will be given to the health of the resource, for without it no development would be possible.

In addition, non-consumptive tourism proposals will be encouraged from the private sector. Sight seeing tours may also benefit from the lake's caribou or cormorant colonies. While private sector proposals are encouraged, they must meet a basic level that the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation wishes to see for this lake.

K. Wildlife Management

a) Broad Objective: to protect and where possible, enhance wildlife habitat on the mainland and populations through input into other resource management plans; to identify and protect rare and endangered species of wildlife and their habitat; to improve our base of knowledge to more effectively manage wildlife; to encourage non-consumptive wildlife viewing opportunities.

b) Moose:

i) Objective: The major objective for moose management is to protect and enhance the moose resource and provide opportunities for recreation (viewing and hunting) for local residents and tourists.

ii) Target: Harvest levels will be based on the results of an aerial moose survey.

iii) Strategy:

- the provincial moose allocation system will be followed to determine the size of the allocation. Estimates of the size of subsistance hunting, wolf predation and poaching will be considered in determining if there is a surplus and the size of the allocation;
- no habitat management techniques of timber harvesting or prescribed burning will be used on the islands;
- if there is an allocation, the present ban on big game hunting on the selected islands will be removed. Primitive weapons only will be considered.

iv) Discussion:

A moose hunt on selected islands of Lake Nipigon (see figure 5) would create economic and recreational opportunities for tourist outfitters and local residents. For this reason, the existing ban on big game hunting may be lifted depending on the results of future aerial surveys. As habitat management is not being considered on the islands, any hunt allocation will be limited in size.

FIGURE 6
MOOSE / CARIBOU DESIGNATED ISLANDS

LAKE NIPIGON INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

1:600 000 (Approximately)

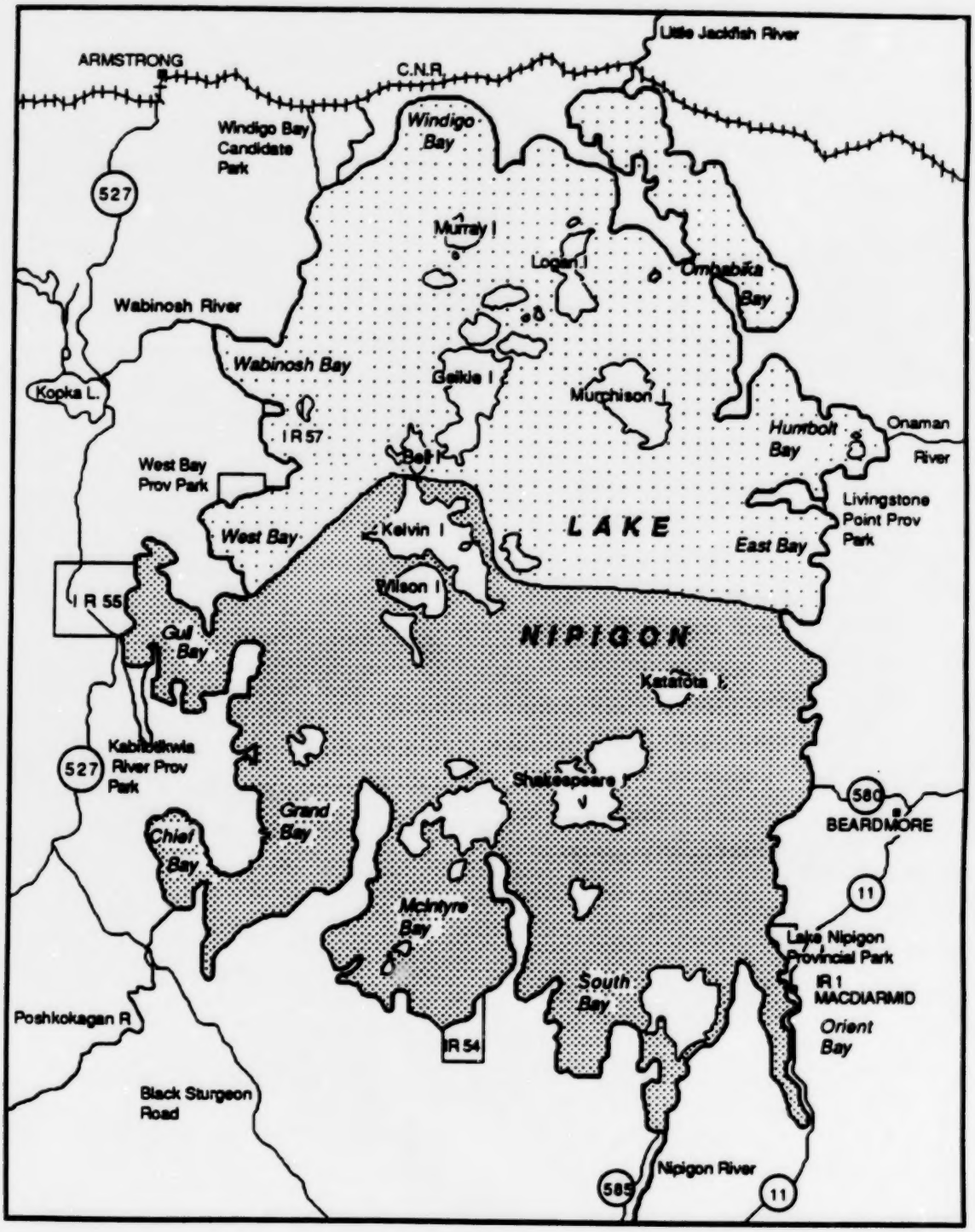
0 10 20 30 Km

N

Study Area Boundary (Approximate)

Zones where moose hunting may occur.

Zones of caribou habitat/high caribou concentration. No moose hunting.



c) Caribou

i) Objective: To manage caribou habitat for the conservation and maintenance of species, and encourage viewing opportunities on specific islands.

ii) Target: To protect critical habitat and travel corridors within the planning area and encourage viewing opportunities.

iii) Strategy:

- to update a map of areas of concern related to caribou (see figure 5);
- to protect mainland areas which are occupied by caribou from habitat deterioration or destruction by input to resource management plans.

iv) Discussion:

A population of between 100 and 135 animals is found on the Lake Nipigon islands, some of which winter near Armstrong. This represents almost one half of the documented caribou population of Nipigon District. Caribou hunting seasons have been closed in Ontario since 1929. Human settlement, overhunting, natural predation, forest fires and logging all contributed to the decline in their numbers. Viewing from a distance is one of the possible benefits of the caribou herd. The northern most islands in the planning area are the most important calving ground and refuge and will be protected from disturbance.

The proposed moose hunt should have little impact on the caribou herd as they are protected from hunting in Ontario by Regulation. In addition, the northern islands of Lake Nipigon that are critical habitat to them, will not be opened to moose hunting in order to minimize disturbance.

In addition, caribou migration routes along the north shore of Lake Nipigon will be protected from disturbance such as timber harvesting through the Timber Management Planning process or the identification and protection of migration routes in Windigo Bay candidate park.

d) Black Bear

The present population of black bear on Lake Nipigon Islands is estimated to be very low. If the big game hunting ban on the islands is lifted, it is anticipated that few black bear will be harvested by sport hunters. Legal recreational hunting of black bear on the mainland will continue to exist.

III. SUMMARY

Lake Nipigon will retain the existing mix of uses with some expansion of tourist facilities, cottaging and hunting.

The plan proposes the establishment of two new lodges. An opportunity for cottage lot development is also proposed for Crown land within the municipality of Beardmore. New access roads will be built to these potential tourist lodges and cottage lots.

Current data indicates that brook trout population is presently stressed and may require the application of special management techniques. Strategies and tactics for enhancing and maintaining their populations will be introduced through the Nipigon District Fisheries Management Plan.

Lake Nipigon Islands, McIntyre, Three Mount and North Peninsulas will be managed extensively for fire. This means fires will be allowed to burn unless deemed a threat to human safety or property values. Measured fire management will be given to the majority of the mainland. Here protection will be given to human life and property, tourism, recreation and forest resources. Settlements around the lake will receive intensive fire management, which means aggressive and sustained attack to ensure minimum wildfire size.

While there are no planned increased in access points, the Ministry of Natural Resources has priorized existing access points for maintenance, if and when funding becomes available.

Forest Management activities may be carried out only on the mainland of the lake if they do not conflict with identified values such as aesthetics, fisheries, tourism and wildlife. In some cases, the 300 metre Area of Concern may be insufficient, therefore necessitating an expansion of the 300 meters to protect the specific value.

The ban on big game hunting on the islands may be lifted to permit moose hunting on selected islands. Major conflicts with caribou habitat will be avoided by allowing moose hunting only on islands in the south half of the lake.

IV. AMENDMENT TO THE NIPIGON DISTRICT LAND USE GUIDELINES

The proposed new guidelines for D.L.U.G. Area 7 Lake Nipigon are as follows:

As this IRM plan is refining and updating the policies of Nipigon D.L.U.G. for Area 7 (Lake Nipigon), some permitted uses have been recommended which are contrary to the originally approved guidelines. For this IRM plan to be approved, it would require an amendment to the Nipigon D.L.U.G.

Through its extensive public involvement program, this plan has met the most important requirement of an amendment to D.L.U.G. The public has had two opportunities to make input: to the draft policy and option and to the preliminary draft plan.

A) Area Description

This area includes Lake Nipigon and islands and the mainland area within 300 metres of the lake's shoreline. Present uses include Crown land recreation, tourism, sport and commercial fishing. It contains parts of the Islands Crown Management Unit, Spruce River Forest, Black Sturgeon Forest, Abitibi-Auden Management Unit and the Nipigon Crown Working Circle, Domtar Armstrong Management Unit and the Armstrong Crown Management Unit on its shoreline. There are four Indian Reserves, 1 candidate and four provincial parks around the lake. Water levels are controlled by Ontario Hydro for power generation. Both woodland caribou and moose inhabit the planning area.

B) Land Use Intent

This area will be managed to retain the existing mix of uses. They include, Crown land recreation, sport and commercial fishing, cottaging, tourism, mining and trapping. Timber operations will be permitted only within 300 metres of the lake mainland shoreline. New roads will be allowed if additional cottaging or tourism development takes place.

Local native and non-native people will play a large role in determining the future uses of this lake.

The tourism potential of this lake shall be developed more in the future.

The Nipigon District Fisheries Management Plan contains specific strategies and tactics for enhancing and maintaining fish populations. Dependant upon access and site condition, disposition of new cottage lots will occur in the municipality of Beardmore. New commercial tourism facilities which promote non-consumptive use of the lake's resources will be encouraged, as will facilities that target under-utilized fish stocks with surpluses.

The Lake Nipigon islands and the three peninsulas (McIntyre, Three Mount and North) will be given "extensive" fire protection, while most of the mainland areas and Jackfish Island Indian Reserve are located in the "measured" fire management zone. In the event of fire, an escaped fire situation analysis will be carried out and a response initiated appropriate to that particular fire situation. Communities in the planning area are granted "intensive" fire protection.

Identified historical sites, bald eagle nests, double crested cormorant colonies, fish spawning grounds and caribou habitat and travel corridors will be given special protection.

C) Land Use Activity for Area No. 7 - Lake Nipigon

Activity	Acceptable Yes	Acceptable No	Guidelines
Aggregate Extraction	X		A permitted activity on the islands for limited quantities where material is necessary to supply construction on the same island. No extraction within 300 metres of the mainland shoreline.
Agriculture		X	No potential identified.
Bait Fishing	X		Harvest will be encouraged to meet demand.
Commercial Fishing	X		This will continue to be the largest resource extractive activity in the area. Quotas may be adjusted as a result of an ongoing assessment of populations and habitat.
Cottaging	X		New lots will be disposed of in the Beardmore area. The municipality or private sector will act as the developer.
Crown Land Recreation	X		This lake will continue to provide recreational opportunities for fishing camping and boating. It shall increase economic benefits to the province from non-resident use. Some existing access points and roads will be given a priority for maintenence if funding becomes available.
Forestry	X		Timber operations may take place within 300 meters of the mainland shoreline. Guidelines for timber operations will be established through the Timber Management process which will provide opportunity for public involvement. No timber operations will be permitted on the islands of Lake Nipigon.

Activity	Acceptable Yes	Acceptable No	Guidelines
Hunting	X		A ban on big game hunting on the islands will be lifted. A primitive weapon hunt will be permitted for moose.
Mining	X		Exploration and extraction will be permitted.
Crown Land Disposition	X		Crown land will be used to stimulate economic development in the area. Land will be disposed of by regular means for tourism or cottaging development as approved by this plan.
Provincial Parks		X	No additional parks. Four parks and one candidate already exists around the lake.
Roads	X		New roads may be permitted for potential cottage access, for potential tourism development.
Rural Residential		X	
Sport Fishing	X		This will continue to be one of the main activities for Crown land users in the area. The preparation of a District Fisheries Management Plan will contain strategies for maintaining and enhancing the fishery of Lake Nipigon.
Tourism	X		Two new lodge developments will be encouraged. Non-consumptive resource use proposals will be encouraged. Existing cruiser operations will continue. Additional cruisers will not be encouraged unless associated with lodges.
Trapping	X		Trappers will be encouraged to harvest 100% of quota.
Wildlife Viewing	X		Opportunities exist for viewing of large animals, such as caribou and moose, and smaller animals or birds.

Activity	Acceptable Yes	Acceptable No	Guidelines
Wild Rice Harvesting	X		At this time, no stands are known to occur in the planning area.
Urban Development		X	
Peat	X		Exploration and extraction may continue on the mainland only. No known deposits exist.

APPENDIX I:

Summary of Public Involvement Program

The Lake Nipigon Integrated Resource Management Plan was taken to the public at two major points:

1. Draft Policy and Options - April/May 1986;
2. Preliminary Draft - September/October, 1987.

Specific public contacts efforts for these two stages are listed below.

A. Draft Policy and Options

(i) Mailing List: in April 1986, there were 140 names on the public mailing list for this plan. On April 17, a copy of the Draft Policy and Options was mailed to everyone on the list.

(ii) Meetings with Interest Groups to present Draft Policy and Options:

Date	Group
April 9, 1986	Lake Nipigon Parkway Committee
April 30, 1986	Orient Bay Cruiser Operators
May 5, 1986	Red Rock Fish and Game Club
May 6, 1986	Commercial Fishermen Lake Nipigon
May 6, 1986	Beardmore Municipal Council
May 7, 1986	Rocky Bay Band
May 8, 1986	South Bay Anglers Association

(iii) Information Sessions to present and discuss Draft Policy and Options with the general public:

Date	Location	Number Attending
April 30 and May 1, 1986	MNR Nipigon District Office	12
May 7, 1986	Beardmore Municipal Council Chambers	24
May 13, 1986	MNR Armstrong Office	6

In all, 58 written responses we received. They are available for public review at any time at the Nipigon District Office of the Ministry of Natural Resources. This input was used to develop the Preliminary Draft.

B. Preliminary Draft Plan

(i) Mailing List: September 1986, there were 252 names on the public mailing list for this plan. A copy of the Preliminary Draft was mailed to everyone on the list. In addition, 100 copies were given to the Nipigon Watchdog Society as they requested.

(ii) Information Centres to present and discuss the Preliminary Draft with the general public:

Draft	Location	Number Attending
September 22, 1988	Beardmore	20
September 23, 1988	MacDiarmid	12
September 24, 1988	Nipigon	22
September 29, 1988	Armstrong	29

In all, 75 written responses wre received. They are available for public review at any time at the Nipigon District Office of the Ministry of Natural Resources. This final plan incorporated input from this stage of public review.

APPENDIX II:

Issues Raised in Public Input

The following is a summary of issues raised in response to the Preliminary Draft of the Lake Nipigon I.R.M. plan. More detailed public input package available on request.

1. Access:

   Public input: No new access to Lake Nipigon. Upgrade and maintain what already exists.

   Response: No new access will be built due to terrain constraints and tourist conflicts on the western shore of the lake. Existing access points have been priorized for maintenance.

2. Cottaging:

   Public input: Many people objected to additional cottage lots on Lake Nipigon as they would conflict with the "wilderness" character of the lake. They suggest inland lakes as alternatives.

   Response: While many people object to additional cottages, it is felt that a limited number of lots in the Beardmore area would boost the local economy. Cottages on inland lakes will also be developed.

3. Fire Protection:

   Public input: Most responses opposed any form of prescribed burns on the islands for moose habitat improvement and called for full fire protection.

   Plan Response: All plans for prescribed burns on the islands have been dropped. Only identified values on the islands such as human life or buildings will be protected from fire. Other fires will be allowed to burn.

4. Mining/Aggregate:

   Public input: Mining activity not a problem at present. Why allow sand and gravel extraction on the islands?

   Response: Proposals, such as tourist lodges, may wish to locate on an island. In this case, small quantities of sand and gravel may be extracted for construction.

5. Timber Harvesting:

   Public input: There should be no timber harvesting on the islands or mainland around Lake Nipigon.

   Response: No harvesting will be allowed on the islands, however limited harvesting will be permitted on the mainland shoreline subject to guidelines to protect identified values.

6. Wildlife:

Public input: Most people opposed hunting on the islands for various reasons. Several advocated managing all islands for caribou.

Response: The islands are a unique environment which will offer high quality hunting opportunities. If well planned, ie. avoid caribou islands, a moose hunt on the islands could be a big revenue generator.

7. Fisheries:

Public input: The general desire of the public was to have an enhanced and improved fishery on Lake Nipigon.

Response: The Nipigon District Fisheries Management Plan contains a number of specific tactics and strategies to improve the fish stocks on Lake Nipigon. They include reduced minimum brook trout possession limits. In addition, the Ministry of Natural Resources will restrict the disposition of Crown land for new lodges for a period of two years after this plan is approved. This will give the MNR an opportunity to implement some fishery rehabilitation tactics. For more details, refer to the Nipigon District Fisheries Management Plan.

APPENDIX III:

Guidelines for the Protection of Identified Values in Areas of Concern

Timber management operations on Crown lands in Ontario sometimes require modification to ensure protection of other resource values. In the timber management planning exercise, a comprehensive examination of alternative modified forest practices is undertaken. This examination will require the consideration of alternative modified practices which could be employed in the particular area of concern. Guidelines for various categories of areas of concern provide information on optional modified practices which could be employed to protect particular values.

Guidelines which are used are:

- Guidelines for Moose Habitat Protection in Ontario;
- Guidelines for the Protection of Fish Habitat in Timber Management;
- Timber Management Guidelines for the Protection of Tourism Values.

Note: The use of these guidelines allows for further public scrutiny.

APPENDIX IV:

Summary of Objective and Target Achievement

A. Summary of Objective Achievement

This plan has four broad objectives as outlined in the Terms of Reference. Three of the four objectives depend heavily on or are influenced strongly by the state of the fish population in this lake. Unfortunately, some of Lake Nipigon's desirable fish stocks are currently heavily stressed. The Nipigon District Fisheries Management Plan will address these problems and attempt to find solutions. This plan's objectives are closely tied to the success of that plan's strategies and tactics.

Specifically, the objectives will be achieved in the following ways:

Objective 1: To provide recreational opportunities on Crown land and waters for day and extended use. This plan confirms the use of existing access points and access roads. High priority access points will be maintained if funding becomes available. Additional cottages will be permitted in the Beardmore area.

Objective 2: To provide a variety of natural resource products toward the achievement of the District's targets, while maintaining sustained resource levels.

- the planning area will continue to contribute toward the district's targets for commercial, sport and bait fish, commercial fur and timber
- it will provide opportunities for moose and bear hunting on the islands.

Objective 3: To contribute to the tourism economy of Northern Ontario

- Lake Nipigon will continue to support existing cruiser operators
- MNR and MTR encourage the development of two high quality tourist establishments on the lake and to this end will prepare a perspectus outlining minimum acceptable proposals.
- MNR and MTR encourage any new tourist proposals which promote non-consumptive use of the lake's resources such as viewing of moose, caribou, cormorant, bald eagles and other wildlife.
- Tourist operators may negotiate skyline reserves with timber companies for parts of the shoreline that are important to their operations through the timber management planning process.

Objective 4: To identify and protect rare and endangered sensitive features in the study area.

- all known sensitive areas are listed in the District Sensitive Areas Report
- they are protected through input to and review of internal plans of this Ministry and external plans of other agencies
- members of the public are asked to identify any new sensitive areas to the ministry.

B. Summary of Target Achievement

The achievement of many targets for Lake Nipigon are closely dependant on the strength of major fish stocks. As better fishery information becomes available targets will be adjusted.

The plan expects to achieve all of the following targets by the year 2000:

QUANTITATIVE TARGETS:

PROGRAM	LAKE NIPIGON TARGET	% OF DISTRICT TARGET
Commercial fish	495,840 kg/yr.	66
Sport fish	15,200 kg/yr.	3.8
Moose (harvest)	20 moose/yr.	1.5
(population)	152 moose/yr.	
Trapping	25 beaver/yr.	0.7

QUALITATIVE TARGETS:

PROGRAM	STRATEGY
Crown Land Recreation	- continue to monitor the needs of Crown Land Recreationists
	- maintain high priority access points if funding becomes available.
Tourism	- the Ministries of Tourism & Recreation and Natural Resources are willing to consider the establishment of two new tourism facilities on Lake Nipigon if the proponent meets the minimum standard set by the Ministry of Tourism & Recreation
	- strongly encourage non-consumptive forms of tourism
	- allow a primitive weapons moose hunting season in W.M.U. 20

PROGRAM	STRATEGY
Caribou	- identify caribou habitat and viewing opportunities
	- protect critical habitat and travel corridors from any disturbances in the planning area
Sensitive Areas	- identify and protect these features as required
Cottaging	- the number of cottages which can be disposed of on Lake Nipigon is yet to be determined, and will be dependant on suitable sites in the Beardmore area.